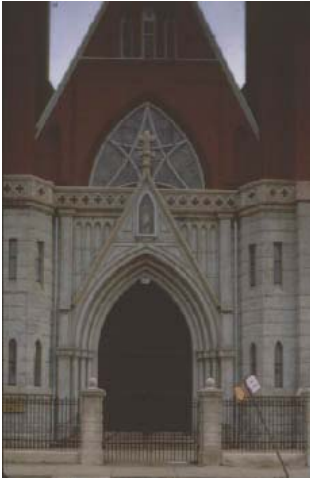


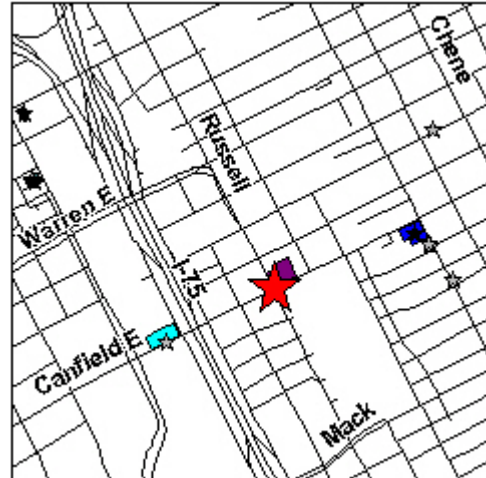
Sweetest Heart of Mary Roman Catholic Church

4440 Russell

Local	✓	10/23/81
State	✓	7/26/74
State Marker	✓	4/1/81
National	✓	1/31/78



Sweetest Heart of Mary



Historic overview:

Sweetest Heart of Mary is one of Detroit's more striking extant examples of Late Gothic Revival church architecture. Its history is deeply rooted in the development of Detroit's early Polish communities. Most of the first Polish immigrants gravitated towards German parishes, due to the German occupation of north Poland. When the new St. Joseph's restricted Polish parishioners to a localized section of the church, 300 families started St. Albertus church. At the same time, Father Dominick Kolasinski arrived, and would soon be dismissed from St. Albertus on charges of financial mismanagement and immoral conduct. When supporters of Kolasinski tried to prevent a new priest from entering St. Albertus, a riot broke out. Father Kolasinski left Detroit in 1886. Kolasinski's followers formed their own church, Sweetest Heart of Mary. Kolasinski returned to preach at Sweetest Heart of Mary in 1888, and was eventually cleared of the charges responsible for his dismissal in 1885.

The major church building, with a seating capacity of 2000, was completed in 1893. Spier & Rohns designed the building. The church has a reputation as the largest in the city, and as the largest double spire church in Michigan. The parish struggled financially, yet during the 1890s they acquired an 1894 Austin organ. Now the oldest electro-pneumatic action organ in the state, it is one of the nation's few remaining instruments of this type. Detroit was a major organ manufacturing center during the 1890s, and Sweetest Heart received the second organ built by the newly organized Austin Organ Company.

